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ABSTRACT

Since no local library can meet the information needs of the community on its own, librarians and local policymakers must look to other existing agencies and channels for support. In every locale are agencies, organizations, and governmental and social service units that daily gather, compile, and disseminate information as one of their missions. Aggressive action by local library administrators will foster an effective program of local cooperation with others in the information business. This manual presents a 99-item checklist for self-assessment by rural librarians and library boards. The checklist contains five sections: (1) assessing library mission statements and the roles and attitudes of librarians and policy boards; (2) assessing library policies and procedures that reflect biases or that encourage equal access to information; (3) assessing library facilities and materials; (4) assessing community needs and resources; and (5) assessing existing or possible cooperative networks and support structures. An appendix contains a bibliography on rural library cooperation listing 97 books and journal articles published since 1970. (SV)

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ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST - A GUIDE TO STRENGTHEN RURAL LIBRARIES IN LIBRARY COOPERATION

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ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST - A GUIDE TO STRENGTHEN RURAL LIBRARIES IN LIBRARY COOPERATION

PREFACE

This checklist was written by Robert N. Case, Director of the Lancaster, Pennsylvania Public library. His original version appeared in the Fall 1980 issue of Rural Libraries. It was modified in summer, 1988, by Thom Hendricks, Head of the Reference Department at the North Dakota State Library. This edited version was presented as part of a workshop on cooperation among rural libraries during the 80th Annual Conference of the National Rural Education Association, held September 24-28, 1988, in Bismarck, North Dakota. The editor wishes to thank the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship at the School of Library Science, Clarion University of Pennsylvania for granting permission to modify this most useful document.

This publication was written as a guide to strengthen the roles and links of a library in providing information. The premise of the author was that since no local library can meet this responsibility alone, its librarian and policy makers must look to using other existing agencies and channels for support. It is not important that all 99 assessment items be completed. What is important is how a library approaches and responds to the items.

INTRODUCTION

Effective library service in a rural community does not just happen because the library exists or laws and regulations make the library adhere to certain standards. Libraries at the local level vary from community to community. Most have evolved through the years with varying degrees of financial stability, community support, and administrative leadership.

How a local library administrator views the job, the community, and the library that serves that community, is part of the message of this manual. How the library administrator can take steps to increase the potential of these views and perceptions may be the value of using the assessment checklist which follows each section of the publication. The purpose of the manual is to open doors to broader horizons for more effective library service at the local level.

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Many local library administrators believe they work in isolation. Often the community is physically far removed from contact with other population centers, and the opportunities for administrators to meet with other library personnel is infrequent. Limited budgets and staffing considerations may not provide the luxury of travel and attendance at area or state and national workshops and conferences. Further frustrations emerge when the local community looks to the local library and its administration to provide the information that is current and readily available.

It is difficult to imagine anyone living in isolation today. Through technology and electronic communication systems, one is never more than a few moments away from history and progress in the making. The emphasis on science and high speed transmission of information and the concerns of the global village have directed attention away from the rich human resources, organizations and structures available locally.

Rural library administrators are not the only ones in the local area concerned with information. Outside the library walls in every locale are agencies, bureaus, organizations, associations, and governmental and social service units that daily gather, compile, and disseminate information as one of their major missions. In the public sector these would include: county extension agents, local governmental authorities and boards; planning commissions and regional authorities; state and federal offices and bureaus; programs and projects; local schools, academic institutions, historical sites, archives and county law libraries; commissions that focus on parks, recreation, housing, land use and community development, to name but a few. In the private sector there are banks and brokers; business and industry; suppliers and wholesalers; distributors and retailers; and trades and crafts of a wide variety. Further sources of information cluster around service clubs, societies and leagues; cultural groups devoted to history, arts, theater, music and education; and a wide range of social, health and welfare organizations. All of these and many more share in the dissemination of information. Some have highly sophisticated ways to get their messsages to the local community. Some may have sources of funding and organizational backing that far exceed local library expectations. With few exceptions, most who administer these entities and information programs also feel a sense of isolation and a frustration in information sharing.

Aggressive action on the part of local library administrators will foster an effective program of cooperation at the local level with others who are involved in the information business. Libraries have available locally, or have access to, information from other sources that will be of great value to these local information brokers and distributors. Working with

these individuals or entities will bring great benefits to the local library and will in turn strengthen the rural library's link in the chain and network of library cooperation.

The assessment checklist and action items in this manual are designed to start the process of self-evaluation and continue the assessment of the local library and community. The process concludes with the local library's relationship with other library-related groups and structures outside the local area. How this manual is used is up to each community library administrator and local policy boards. Some questions and tasks statements in the manual may already be completed. The assessment items will include some tasks that can be fulfilled with relative ease and initiated at little or no cost. There are many tasks that will take a long time to complete with possible time and dollar investments not immediately available. These items should be thoroughly explored, but not necessarily abandoned, if they produce final results that will strengthen the local library. It is recognized that each query and task may lead to other action items in order to complete the task. The task statements may also be altered and modified to more closely identify with a local concern or situation.

This manual should be viewed as a guideline. The assessment checklist is not mandated by law and should only be viewed as a guideline, one of many that are available and in use. Completion of the 99 checklist items does not itself insure an effective local library and its role in the community or its strength in a network of library cooperation. How a library administrator and the policy makers of a local library use this manual may, however, say a great deal about the effectiveness of leadership. The ability of that leadership to assume and practice its responsibility to ensure that it fulfills its mission statement is vital. But what is most vital is that information to the local constituency is readily, freely, and equitable assessable.

ASSESSING MISSION STATEMENTS

The role of libraries in the United States has evolved from a long heritage dating back to colonial times. Then early settlers came with their few, but precious books. As the hardships of the settlers eased somewhat and villages became towns, there arose a need to provide places for schools and learning.

Libraries play an essential role in a democratic society. Free and equal access to information of all kinds is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and is essential if we are to govern ourselves, make responsible decisions, and become contributing citizens. There are today as many kinds of libraries as there are special needs for information. Long past are the days when life was simple and conducted within the context of a small social and geographic area. Today our life in the global village is immediately affected by events and decisions from places far around the world. As a result, we have now moved into the Information Age, an age that through electronics and technology has brought new awareness of social, economic, and political issues worldwide to our local communities and door steps.

Libraries will play an increasingly important role in helping citizens at the local level meet their informational needs. At the outset, one may view a small rural library as incapable of responding to such a variety of demands. This, of course, may be true, but at the same time it is also true that no library in the world, no matter how large its resources, has ever been able to meet these needs. Early realization of this brought about a variety of systems, networks, cooperatives and exchanges of resources, and services.

The small rural library is as important in a link in the chain of information gathering and dissemination as the large urban, academic, and special libraries. The importance of these links is to foster and ensure equal access. Those are the key words--equal access. Because one must or even chooses to live in an isolated environment far removed physically from great urban and academic information centers, does not mean that with time and guidance and the use of established channels, he or she cannot have access to information.

As a librarian or administrator of a rural library, you play a key role in the ongoing process of cooperative library practice. You have a responsibility not only to the citizens of your community to meet their informational needs, but also to understand and participate in the existing and evolving systems

of cooperative library development at the local, state, and national level. This guide will hopefully provide guidance to local librarians and administrators in not only understanding their roles and attitudes in cooperatives, but also their performance as administrators in the ongoing operations of a library. Following each section is an assessment checklist designed as a guide to respond to individual questions or tasks. The assessment checklist is not all-inclusive and is viewed only as a first step in raising one's consciousness to the broad spectrum of queries and tasks one might consider individually in the process of further developing the library's roles and importance in the local community.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

		Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
1.	Do you have a knowledge or understanding of the history of library development in the United States?				
2.	Do you know the history and development of your library?				
3.	Do you have on file the history and documents pertaining to the development of your library?				
4.	Has the heritage of your library been shared with and recognized by local citizens?				
5.	Do you understand the importance of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States as it relates to your library?				
6.	Are you able to articulate the importance of the First Amendment to your governing board and the citizens of your community?				
7.	Does your governing board understand the First Amendment as it relates to your library?				
8.	Do you have on display the Library Bill of Rights and the Right To Read statement as adopted by the American Library Association?				
9.	Does your governing board have a written and adopted policy on the role and mission of your library?				
10.	Have you analyzed the library budget to determine what percentages come from private, local, state or federal funds?				
11.	What are the trends emerging over the past several years that are changing the percentage figures in financial support of the library?				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
12. Have you and the governing board discussed these trends and shared them with citizens and appropriate authorities?				
13. Do you maintain a list of queries or information needs that cannot be met by your library?				
14. Identify at least ten broad subjects areas that your library cannot meet on a continuing basis.				
15. Identify at least five ways in which you view your library as an important resource in a network system of cooperative library service.				
16. Do you maintain an active list of other libraries, agencies or information centers which you have used to provide information for library users?				
17. Identify and utilize at least five ways to inform local citizens of their right to equal access to information.				
18. As the librarian or library administrator, develop, write and have on file your philosophy on interlibrary cooperation.				
19. As a citizen, develop, write, and have on file your perception of what your library should be.				
20. Develop, produce, and disseminate a questionnaire to citizens on what they perceive their library to be. Analyze and publicize the results of the study to the local community.				

ASSESSING ADMINISTRATIVE ATTITUDE

Library cooperation works. The fact that it does is due, in a large measure, to a large cadre of library administrators and leaders and policy makers in the informational field. As the administrator of a library, you are both on the receiving and sharing end of many networks, systems and cooperatives already established. Just as you and your library depend upon these existing mechanisms, so do the larger units depend upon you to keep the machinery of the library cooperation moving.

It was not too long ago that many responsible for library services at the local level were overly possessive and protective of the library's resources. Cumbersome circulation systems and restrictive registration policies did more to preserve the library and its collection than it did to provide for easy and equal access to information for the library user. Library administrators cannot be entirely blamed for this. A lack of funds made the books purchased even more precious. Funding also affected the number of hours a week a library was open. In many libraries the typical user's response to the library about a needed book was that it was either "not in the collection, always out, or kept on closed reserve." In some instances, little was done to correct the situation, but fortunately, in some areas, creative leadership began to devise systems to share resources and procedures to help other library units meet user demands. Library cooperation is not limited to just sharing of resources. Today, it is generally believed that no library can exist independently. Increasingly, library systems are designed to provide a wide array of service and administrative functions either through cooperatives or contractual agreements. Today, many libraries belong to a number of cooperative organizations which again attest to the need and value of these structures in meeting the increasing demands for information.

As necessity has often been claimed as the mother of invention, it may also have had much to do with the change of attitudes for survival. This is certainly true within the context of library services. Library administrators, frustrated with the increasing difficulty of meeting informational needs of library users, soon found it advisable to initiate new philosophies and attitudes about collection development, library programs, and services. While big is not always better, it can often be more more efficient and cost effective. Larger administrative service units can also support auxiliary services funded upon a broader financial base. Often the success of library cooperation means members must give up some priorities in order to receive benefits from a larger unit. There was a time when library administrators and staffs were reluctant to relinquish their special skills deemed so essential to the practice of librarianship. Today, through cooperatives, adminis

trative service units, and the use of technology, library personnel have been able to provide more meaningful service for library users by applying their time saved on some skills. Also changing is the image of the library as only a place for books and print information. While early library cooperatives were formed to share books and print material. Cooperative networks today include a wide array of film and electronic data bases. Increasingly, libraries are linked to other human resource centers and community agencies who share in and support the informational needs of a local area.

As an administrator of a library, it is important that you can identify the trends in library services, as well as ways to make resources outside your community available to library users. Equally important is the philosophy you exhibit with your staff and the community to encourage and provide for the development of a more effective means of information sharing. The assessment checklist which follows, will provide first steps in a self-analysis of the attitudes and responses of the library administrator who has, among other responsibilities, that of creating a positive climate toward library cooperation among the library staff, policy makers, and funding sources.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
21. Identify in a listing at least ten trends you see in the future of the library you administer.				
22. Share a listing of trends with your governing board identifying ways these trends will affect the quality of service.				
23. Identify policies or procedures that may tend to make your library appear as an elitist institution.				
24. Identify policies or procedures that may tend to make your library restrictive to users.				
25. Identify at least five ways your library may reflect biases to age, sex, or special groups.				
26. Review policies or procedures that tend to promote biases in your library's services.				
27. Identify at least five ways your library functions as an isolated unit in the community.				
28. Survey library responses to patron requests and identify to what degree the library is unable to meet these informational needs.				
29. Name at least ten agencies your library calls upon on a fairly regular basis to obtain information.				
30. Consult with your staff and identify the ten functions your library does best.				
31. Consult with your staff and identify ten functions your library does not do well.				
32. Correlate items identified in the two tasks immediately preceding this statement with the results of item #20.				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
33. Prepare a brief report on the outcome of item #32 and present it to your governing board for review.				
34. Identify the characteristics a library administrator should have to exhibit a positive attitude toward service.				
35. Use the characteristics identified in preceding task statement as basis for agenda for staff and governing board meetings.				
36. Consult with county or state library consultants to review data and observations gathered in local studies of service and attitudes.				
37. Using county or state library consultants implement plans for inservice meetings with staff and governing boards on attitudinal changes.				
38. Visit at least three other libraries to discuss services and how these libraries approach their service problems.				
39. Create a variety of posters and memos for self and staff to foster positive attitudes toward service.				
40. Review on a regular basis progress made in library's service attitude, then modify, add or delete items for continued progress and review.				

ASSESSING THE RURAL LIBRARY

The responsibility in administering a rural library entails continuous assessment of the collection, services, programs, staff, and facilities. Equally important is the role of the library administrator in bring the results of these assessments to the attention of the governing board, to the community, and to policy and decision makers at all levels.

Because we live in a changing society, there will never be the ideal. From time to time libraries are planned and built that seem to be the model and answer to all library needs. But all too quickly, these too, become outdated and need to be modifed in many areas. Libraries built ten to twenty years ago are often inaccessible to handicapped users and they are unable to incorporate electronic systems and new technologies. Information changes so rapidly that whole new subject area and classification schemes need to be developed. This new information also comes in a variety of new formats requiring new methods of housing and distribution. While libraries were once depositories for information, they are now community centers for learning and include a variety of environments and settings for small and large group instruction and classes.

Continuous assessment of the rural library is important as a management tool to study ongoing operations of the library. It is equally important to focus on assessment as it relates to library cooperation. Library administrators have fortunately realized the changing nature of library service. No library facility will ever remain large enough, no collection varied enough in size and content, no staff maintain the special expertise, and no funding ever be totally secure enough to meet growing community needs. The library must go outside its walls to serve and to find resources beyond its own collection to meet user needs and program demands.

A library administrator will easily recognize the limitations of facilities, collections, staff and services that a particular library has in providing services. A wise administrator will take immediate steps to share these limitations with others and initiate planning steps for assessing these limitations through a variety of options and alternatives. The early results of taking these planning steps may foster a variety of avenues that lead to library and interagency cooperation. The end result might possibly enhance the library's ability to become a more effective and accountable entity within the community.

Initial steps for assessment might begin by meeting with staff members in an informal manner to explore areas of the library that need special attention. Following a listing of concerns, a more structured process could easily develop to study areas that rank high on a priority listing of concerns. At this time, it would be useful to identify individuals outside the library who could contribute special expertise to problems and solutions. Included in this level of involvement would be professionals from other library units and administrative units including county, district, regional, or state library consultants. Administrators might also wish to include individuals from the local community whose expertise in a special field might provide an additional dimension and contribution to a particular study.

Assessment is a long, but essential, process in library management. Taking the first steps to identify areas of concern will help establish the breadth and scope of a local library assessment and will lead to delineating some broad action items. The assessment checklist, which follows, provides a guideline to initiate some early study questions in the analysis of the library. It is expected that the process of following the assessment statements or queries will encourage the library administrator, staff, and community advisory groups to continue explorations. The results of these studies should identify, for the local library, its ability to become more effectively involved in library cooperation and its ability to serve library users at the local level.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
41. Work with a team reflecting the point of view of the user to identify the positive and negative features of your library.				
42. Work with a special task force to prioritize a listing of desired changes in facilities and indicate short and long range plans for modification.				
43. Identify and contact community groups and agencies that could provide support to bring about immediate and low cost changes in the facilities.				
44. Explore the use of volunteers and local groups to contribute labor and teams to bring about changes in facilities.				
45. Contact and propose to local funding agencies interest in providing financial support to implement long range modification plans in the facilities.				
46. Identify areas in your library that are barriers to handicapped persons.				
47. Observe the furnishings, displays, directionals, and interior decor to identify what is useful for effective library service and what contributes to clutter and patron confusion.				
48. Eliminate from the facility the accumulation of furniture, holiday and seasonal decorations and donations that serve no purpose.				
49. Assess the collection to eliminate materials that are outdated, no longer circulating, or whose condition is beyond effective use.				
50. Review and modify policies that encourage storing of back issues of periodicals no longer useful or in demand.				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
51. Invite library consultants and specialists to analyze the workspaces, traffic patterns, and storage facilities in your library.				
52. Consult with specialists to develop a plan for more effective lighting and ways to make the interior environment more attractive.				
53. Analyze staff functions to identify practices and procedures that could be performed outside the library on a service contract.				
54. Analyze and update insurance policies and maintenance contracts to protect the facility's future use.				
55. Understand trends in library service to assess your library's facilities, collection and program areas to determine how they meet needs of special groups.				
56. Revise and modify policies on the use of facilities by outside groups and agencies.				
57. Plan and implement a series of informational meetings with community agencies and special interests groups on the services of the library.				
58. Prepare special interest packets for display or distribution to outside groups promoting library resources and services.				
59. Schedule and implement, on a regular basis, review sessions with community leaders and special groups on the progress of library services and new concerns that have emerged.				

ASSESSING THE COMMUNITY

A library must be studied in the context of whom it serves. There is no typical group to use as a model for library services at the local level. A library administrator will find it helpful to explore the nature of users at the same time library assessment plans are in progress, for the users themselves will have the overall influence on the library's programs and goals.

The local library will have many resources to aid in an assessment. Gathering local sources and data will also lead to other institutions and agencies whose studies and publications will have valuable information for the library and study teams. Identifying these sources and agencies in itself is a vital first step in library cooperation and information sharing. Many of these agencies maintain records, produce studies, and publish reports for a limited use and clientele. Knowledge of these sources is essential for a library administrator in the planning and management process. As local libraries serve a broader segment of the total community, access to this special knowledge is also important in linking the information needs of the community.

Rural libraries are often compared with the size of the community served. Size in itself has much bearing on the kind of library service provided, but the word needs to be defined accurately in terms of population, geographic area, or amount of financial support. The size of the population is important because state and federal aid allocations are based upon most recent census figures. Questions that have direct bearing and influence on the library's collection include what age group is increasing or decreasing. Is the population growing or are individuals and family units leaving the area? Likewise, the size of the geographic area should identify physical barriers and boundaries that may affect delivery of library service.

The political and economic factors of the community play a vital role in influencing the quality of library service. Library community assessment teams will need to know the history of these forces to study trends and identify areas of concern for the future. What effect have the political and economic leaders had upon the community and the stability and way of life to the population? It is often difficult to view community studies objectively. The use of consultants from other library administrative units and areas may be helpful. Comparison studies with similar communities may also produce benefits. The review of long range plans of other library organizations may provide suggestions and valuable guidance to local assessment teams on how to achieve goals and tap other resources to support these goals.

Finally, library administrators will want to have a firm understanding of the social, educational, and cultural elements of the community. Communities are essentially groups of people who live together for a variety of reasons and circumstances. The heritage of these people needs to be analyzed. What brought them to the community and what holds them there may have much to say about their ethnic background, and the influence of the family unit on the leadership of the citizens themselves. How the members of the community cluster into social groups is important to understand. Even more important is knowing if such clusters serve a positive influence in the community. A community that is standing still or progressing can have a direct impact upon a local library's efforts. Community assessment should also include the identification of the educational and cultural entities of the local area. Understanding their philosophies, programs and long range plans may lead to cooperative programs that will benefit the library, as well as the local community.

An effective library administrator should know first hand and be able to communicate freely with those local entities and agencies which provide special information. A knowledge of records, resources, and services from town, township, city and county governments is essential. Equally important is the wide array of services and information sources from county extension agents, the state and federal agencies, and health and human service agencies located nearby or within the library service area. Local accessibility to information sources is extremely important. A knowledge of the collections in the area, including other libraries, schools, academic institutions, churches, special businesses and historical and cultural sources, will foster much library cooperation at the local level if procedures and mechanisms are cooperatively developed and implemented.

The initial leadership to study the community and its information needs will often be the responsibility of the local library administrator. The study will eventually involve contact and meeting with a wide variety of administrators and those designated as resource personnel for particular units or agencies. Continued exploration of the community with others will ultimately have great benefits and pay rich dividends for all concerned with information in the community. The following assessment checklist will serve only as a guide to initiate plans for a community study and should help to identify the vast potential of types of resources that can be shared at the local level. The important outcome of the assessment is knowledge of a community that is more clearly understood by those responsible for the dissemination of information.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
60. Prepare a listing of all sources in the local library useful for a community study.				
61. Work with governing board and special study groups to identify the scope and plans for a community study.				
62. Inform public of community study and create mechanism for their input.				
63. Identify and contact all community leaders, government units, extension agencies, and social and business organizations that can provide resources for a community study.				
64. Assemble listings or packets of resources available from community groups that would be appropriate for a community study.				
65. Consult district or state library for guidance in beginning methods of a community study.				
66. Finalize plans for community study that include data gathering and interview assignments, schedules of special study teams and target dates for completion.				
67. Schedule and conduct interviews with community leaders and agency administration to identify cooperative ways materials and services can be shared.				
68. Acquire and study goals and long range plans of local government units, planning agencies, social service groups including goals and plans of local education agencies and cultural groups.				
69. Identify ways the local library can provide resources and services to support goals of other community groups.				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
70. Develop plans to maintain a clearinghouse service of local resources available through the library or other community groups.				
71. Develop plans to create and fund a community human resource directory that identifies special skills and expertise of local residents.				
72. Complete analysis of reports and findings of study groups to prepare final report of community study.				
73. Refine report of community study to include identified trends in the community, special concerns as these trends relate to library service and study recommendations that will lead to action items.				
74. Promote and inform citizens, community leaders and organizations of the results of the study, encouraging their responses to findings.				
75. Initiate and implement plans at the local level to organize a consortium of local information agencies.				
76. Maintain contact and representation with local planning and policy groups to ensure continued update of community plans.				
77. Implement steps to ensure library is recipient and depository of studies, reports, brochures and information resources from all community, educational, social, and cultural units.				
78. Plan at least four meetings a year with information specialists and/or administrators from other community agencies to share ideas.				
79. Analyze and apply results of community survey updates and revisions as new trends or changes affect the growth and development of the library.				

ASSESSING AVAILABLE SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The process of assessing a local library and other information sources and centers in an area contributes greatly to interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing. However, even access to a broader information base at the local level will not readily supply all the information needs. The next step is to understand and explore ways to use systems, networks, and organizations that function outside the community. Utilizing these structures will lead to access to information beyond local, municipal or county lines into state and national information networks. Whether the structure is approached from top down or the bottom up, the local library and its users receive the ultimate benefits in gaining access to resources and services far beyond their individual ability to acquire or maintain. The concept of equal access to information had much influence on the development of these structures and network systems. Promoting the utilization of these established mechanisms will do much to benefit local citizens in their quest for information.

Each state in the nation has devised a network system of resource sharing and support services. These structures differ depending upon geographical consideration or economic, political or population influences. While some states administer their own single system, other states designate county library units to be the links for interlibrary cooperation. Regional library systems have been created in several states, while still others rely upon the strengths of large urban libraries to administer interlibrary cooperation programs.

The assessment checklist which concludes this guide is not intended to provide instant solutions to interlibrary cooperation concerns, nor will it provide immediate methods to increase the library cooperation that presently exists. Your responses to the questions and action items will help open doors to subsequent plans - still to be imagined - by you and others to work more effectively in future library cooperation efforts.

		Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
80.	Meet with State Library or Education Agency consultants to review interlibrary loan policies and procedures.				
81.	Maintain and update a list of all library and information centers in your area.				
82.	Request State Library or Education Agency to conduct an inservice meeting with area information personnel to discuss interlibrary loan procedures and special sources and network channels of information.				
83.	Schedule and visit other libraries and information agencies to assess special collections and share ideas.				
84.	Request from State Library or Education Agency a report or listing of periodical holdings available in their service area.				
85.	Observe on a scheduled visitation the operations of a state or regional interlibrary loan operation.				
86.	Request the State Library or Education Agency to develop an area resource guide for library users.				
87.	Implement book and film discussion meetings and explore updating sessions on the availability and use of other media formats.				
88.	Identify the types of services you receive from the State Library or Education Agency.				
89.	Make a list of support or cooperative services not presently available, but. if provided, would be of benefit to your community.				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
90. Explore with community agencies and area information centers the potential of providing supplemental services for a variety of library-related needs.				
91. Explore with State Library or Education Agency the equitable distribution of local, state and federal funding.				
92. Identify five services you believe could provide a cost savings if administered under a central unit or agency.				
93. Maintain procedures that would ensure your library will be on updated mailing and distribution lists of state and national bureaus and information agencies that would have benefit to your library users.				
94. Explore with State Library or Education Agency the use of new technologies to support production and dissemination of services and resources.				
95. Identify with larger coordinating units, the expected advantages achieved from central administration of personnel recruitment, job classification plans, employee benefit programs, as well as central purchasing of materials, equipment, supplies, insurance, and maintenance contracts and services.				
96. Initiate efforts for central coordinating agencies to gather data and report on an annual basis a comparative study on support and services of libraries in the area.				
97. Request from State Library or Education Agency the development and maintenance of a clearinghouse of program ideas and resources to be utilized by information agencies in the local area.				

	Needs Attention	Under Study	Task Completed	Date
98. Maintain an active and involved membership status in library-related professional and educational associations as well as state and local societies and organizations.				
99. Develop a week-in-review log that identifies and/or highlights problems, areas of concern, creative ideas, or observations that could affect your work or library service and use this material for discussions with consultants.				

LIBRARY COOPERATION FOR RURAL LIBRARIES: A BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

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LIBRARY COOPERATION FOR RURAL LIBRARIES: A BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is designed as a guide to materials that provide ideas on library cooperation. The projects and suggestions covered in the articles cited in the bibliography can be especially useful for those small libraries in rural areas, whether public, school or community.

The compiler reviewed some 110 articles to insure that only the most valuable references were included. Only relevant articles published during the last twenty years in the English language are included.

Four sources were used for the bibliographic search:

1. The Bibliography found in L. J. Amey's COMBINING LIBRARIES: The Canadian and Australian Experience, pages 383-425.

2. Maureen E. Gilluly's Cooperation Between Types of Libraries: An Annotated Bibliography, 1969-1971 Supplement.

3. SCHOOL AND LIBRARY COOPERATION: A BIBLIOGRAPHY published in **Rural Libraries** Vol. 1, No. 2, Spring 1980, pages 89-121.

4. LIBRARY LITERATURE: AN INDEX TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE.

All references chosen for inclusion are available through interlibrary loan at most libraries. About 10% of the articles were found in the North Dakota State Library periodical collection. Another 80% were obtained at no charge through the OCLC Interlibrary Loan Subsystem. Only 10% were obtained through interlibrary loan at a charge that averaged $3.00 per article.

Thom Hendricks
North Dakota State Library
September 1988

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